

The Hand that Destroys the Establishment of the Eye

Each Hebrew letter has an ideographic meaning.

Each word not only has the meaning of the word itself but also the combined meaning of the letters that comprise the word.

The name “Yeshua” is made up of the letters

“Yud” which means “Hand”

“Shin,” which means “destroy”

“Vav,” which means “secure or establish”

“Ayin,” which means “Eye.”

So, the name Yeshua can be translated to mean, “The Hand that Destroys the Establishment of the Eye”

YHWH means “Behold The Hand, Behold The Nail”

Hebrewideograms

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Hebrew Ideograms

Interpret lexical roots of Hebrew terms

הַשְׁמָד שֶׁל יְהוָה

G.J. Taylor, Ph.D.

An ideogram (fr. Gk *idéo*-, ‘idea’ + *-gramma*, ‘writing’) is a written or drawn character viewed as symbolizing an idea, such as Chinese writing and ancient hieroglyphs and pictographs. An ideographic meaning may be derived from a group of characters that form a word. Below is a basic list of Hebrew meanings. For instance, *aleph* was originally represented by the drawing of a bull’s head; so the idea includes not only strength and power but, by extension, leadership, force and danger...any attribute of the object.

Use the table below to decipher a possibly hidden meaning in the Bible. Some examples are given. If you need a Hebrew or Aramaic term interpreted, e-mail it to me in your native tongue and I will post an interpretation if meaningful. Use the chart below. I would be

very interested in what others decipher from Hebrew terms. If you wish to share your insight and have your interpretation published, give your name and town or country.

Letter	Name	Picture	No.	Meaning
א	aleph	Ox/bull head	1	Strength, leader, power.
ב	beth	Tent floor plan	2	Family, house.
ג	gimmel	Foot	3	Camel, pride, gather, foot, walk, carry.
ד	daleth	Tent door	4	Pathway, entrance, hang, move.
ה	he	Man with raised arms	5	Lo!, behold!, reveal, breath.
ו	waw	Tent peg	6	Nail, peg, add, secure, hook.
ז	zayin	Mattock	7	Plow, food, nourish, weapon, cut off.
ח	heth	Tent wall	8	Life, fence/wall, inside/outside, divide/halve, cut off/separate/separation.
ט	teth	Basket	9	Snake, surround, contain, mud.
י	yodh	Arm & closed hand	10	Hand, arm, work(s), deed, power, effort, throw, worship.
כ ך (final form)	kaph	Open palm	11	Bend, palm of hand/to open, allow, tame.
ל	lamed	Shepherd staff	12	Teach, staff/goad, yoke, control, bind, toward.
מ ם (final form)	mem	Water	13	Water, blood, flow, chaos, mighty, nations/people.
נ ן (final form)	nun	Seed	14	Seed, son, heir, continue, fish, activity, life.
ס	samekh	Thorn	15	Hand on staff, support/prop, protect, grab, hate.
ע	ayin	Eye	16	Watch, see, know, experience, shade.
פ ף (final form)	peh	Mouth	17	Mouth/speak/word, blow, scatter, edge.
צ ץ (final form)	tsade	Destination and path	18	Man on side, desire, need, journey, chase, hunt.
ק	qoph	Sun on horizon	19	Condense, circle, time, behind, sun oh horizon.
ר	resh	Man's head	20	First, person, top, beginning.
ש	shin	Two front teeth	21	two teeth, sharp, press, eat, consume, destroy.
ת	tav	Crossed sticks	22	Mark, sign, signal, monument, covenant.

INSTRUCTIONS: When deciphering a Hebrew ideogram, read from right to left or reverse the order for English syntax, although the ideographic meaning of a word may be derived by reading in either direction. Each word may have more than one interpretation, but each will harmonize with an alternative one, if correctly interpreted. The table above applies to Hebrew and Aramaic terms only. Reading the Bible cover to cover facilitates meaningful interpretation. Remember that God left room for doubt, so that there would be room for faith.

Example 1:

Satan: שטן - '*satān*, fr. Primitive root, 'to attack', fig. 'accuse'. Adversary, accuser, opponent.

Reversed:	Shin	+	Teth	+	Nun
	ש		ט		ן
	two teeth		snake		seed
	sharp		surround		son
	press		contain		heir
	eat		mud		continue
	consume				fish
	devour				activity
	destroy				life

Interpretation:

1. (The) **destroying snake** (of) **life**, or (the) **snake** (that) **destroys life**.
2. (The) **consuming snake** (that) **surrounds seed**.

Exposition: Satan is the old serpent (Rev 12:9) that destroys life (Rev. 9:11, Apollyon, Gk. for 'destroyer'; 1 Pet. 5:8; Jn 8:44). He is not on earth but in the air, surrounding Adam's seed on earth (Eph.2:2). He is not omnipresent, but his demons serve him on earth (Rev. 12:4; 16:14; Eph. 6:12). Interesting that God identifies of the "prince of Persia" (Iran) as being a demon (Dan.10:13).

Summary: The idea of Satan is a being like a consuming serpent that surrounds and destroys all active life—active life because immediately after death he has no influence (Heb. 9:27). So man's extra-biblical invention of purgatory is heretical as judgment immediately follows death. And the fact we naturally die only "once" dispels the Satanic lie of reincarnation.

Example 2:

Messiah: מָשִׁיחַ - hellenized transliteration of Aramaic *mashiyach*, 'the anointed (consecrated) deliverer of Israel'.

Reversed:	mem	+	shin	+	yodh	+	heth
	מ		ש		י		ה
	water		two teeth		hand		life
	blood		sharp		arm		fence
	flow		press		work(s)		wall
	chaos		eat		deed		inside
	mighty		consume		power		outside
	nations		destroy		effort		divide
	people				throw		halve
					worship		cut off
							separate

Interpretation:

1. (The) **life** (that) **works** (to) **destroy chaos**

Exposition: Yeshua (Jesus) is the life (Jn 14:6) and logic ('logos', Jn 1:1; 1 Cor. 14:33), the antithesis of chaos, which author is Satan the deceiver (Jn 8:44; Rev. 12:9).

2. (The) outside (of this world, Jn 18:36) divider (Yeshua, Lk. 12:51, Jn 15:2) that cuts off (the) power (Lk. 20:20, of) water (races, people, Rev. 17:15).

Exposition: As Jesus the Messiah, tangibly outside of this world, divided the Red Sea through Moses, so He also divides people and nations...Judeo-Christianity from atheism (Lk. 12:51). Jesus is resolutely against leftist aspirations, such as forming a "new world order." The communistic United Nations is an example of modern Bablylonianism and the pseudo-religion of the fornicating ecumenical "church." Just as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats (Mt. 25:32), on judgment day Christ will separate the chaff from the wheat (Mt. 3:12); the chaff "on the left" will be thrown into the eternal lake of fire to burn forever (Mt. 25:41,46).

3. (The) blood (that) destroys (the) worship (of) life.

Exposition: Truth, ever paradoxical, foretells the end result of practicing humanism, such as selfishly putting your own life first (Mt. 16:25), which is contrary to genuine love (Jn 15:13). Marxist Eric Fromm's seductive philosophy "love yourself first before you can love someone else" that helped fuel the "Me generation" comes to mind. The Messiah will destroy all selfish life.

Example 3:

God: אֱלֹהִים 'elohiym, the generic name of God in Holy Writ, always in the plural that is congruent with the doctrine of the trinity, i.e. an omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent triune being (Gen. 1:26).

Reversed:	Aleph	+	lamed	+	he	+	yodh	+	mem
	א		ל		ה		י		מ
	strength		teach		lo!		hand		water
	leader		staff		behold!		arm		blood
	power		goad		reveal		work(s)		flow
			yoke		breath		deed		chaos
			control				power		mighty
			bind				effort		nations
			toward				throw		people
							worship		

Interpretation:

1. (The) **power** (that) **controls breath** (and) **work** (of) **people**.

Exposition: God is sovereign (Ps. 103:19, 115:3; Job 42:2; Pr. 19:21). But He may permit suffering if it benefits us spiritually (Ps. 66:10; Rom. 8:28). Naturally we will disagree with the latter (Pr. 16:25). Satan is as stupid as he is cunning, not aware God is using him like as an instrument to humble the proud, even the most righteous (Job 1:12). Well, maybe I just let the cat out of the bag.

Example 4:

Here is my response to a request for interpretation by a subscriber. Sorry for the small print.

A proper noun: קפר Because the word denotes a personal name, it is unlikely to appear in a dictionary or any translation program. The name anglicized may be Cafer or Kaper.

Reversed:	qoph	+	peh	+	resh
	ק		פ		ר
	condense		mouth		first
	circle		speak		person
	time		word		top
	behind		blow		beginning
			scatter		
			edge		

Interpretation:

The meaning attributed to a name. (A) **person** (who) **speaks** or whose speech is condense (i.e. speaks **concisely**). An articulate person, and thus one who commands respect. The construct also implies that such a person is disciplined, evidenced by the ability to exercise power through verbal expression. Moreover, the idea is someone higher in order, such as an authority, a superior, or, in theology, someone less affected by the degenerate nature of mankind.

עברית ללוצרים

בס"ד

1.8 Hebrew Pictograms




















Hebrew Consonants -

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Ancient Hebrew Pictograms

Like other ancient writing systems, the Hebrew alphabet originally was written using a pictographic script. Later, the pictograms evolved into a Hebrew script (sometimes called [Paleo-Hebrew](#)) that strongly resembled the ancient Phoenician alphabet. This was the Hebrew (*ketav Ivri*) used by the Jewish nation up to the Babylonian Exile (or, according to Orthodox Jews, until the Exodus from Egypt). Examples can be found on coins and clay fragments (called *ostraca*). Today, both the Torah and newspapers use modernized renditions of the Aramaic-style script, though everyday correspondence is written using Hebrew cursive.

Warning: While the study of the pictographic script can sometimes yield insight into the underlying meaning (etymology) of Biblical Hebrew words, it is generally to be avoided as a stand-alone exegetical principle since this can lead to speculations and doubtful interpretations. For honest interpretation, the rule of thumb is to first master the *p'shat* (plain historical meaning) before moving on to [other "levels"](#) of the Scriptures.

Name	Pictograph	Meaning	Name	Pictograph	Meaning
Aleph		Ox / strength / leader	Lamed		Staff / goad / control / "toward"
Bet		House / "In"	Mem		Water / chaos
Gimmel		Foot / camel / pride	Nun		Seed / fish / activity / life
Dalet		Tent door / pathway	Samekh		Hand on staff / support / prop
Hey		Lo! Behold! "The"	Ayin		Eye / to see / experience
Vav		Nail / peg / add / "And"	Pey		Mouth / word / speak
Zayin		Plow / weapon / cut off	Tsade		Man on side / desire / need
Chet		Tent wall / fence / separation	Qof		Sun on horizon / behind
Tet		Basket / snake / surround	Resh		Head / person / first
Yod		Arm and hand / work / deed	Shin		Eat / consume / destroy
Kaf		Palm of hand / to open	Tav		Mark / sign / covenant

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The table above is sometimes used to infer the (supposed) latent meaning of various Biblical terms. Generally, the process is one of simple substitution, where the ancient pictographic symbol is substituted for some Ashri text (modern book text). For example:

"Word Picture"		Classical Hebrew	
Pictograph	Meaning	Hebrew	Meaning
	Strong Leader		Name for God; "Strength." Used 250 times in the <i>Tanakh</i> .
	Strength (of the) house		Father

Related Topics:

- [History of Hebrew Language](#)
- [Pre-Babylonian Hebrew](#)

בס"ד

A Brief History of the Hebrew Language



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Lashon HaKodesh -

A Brief History of Hebrew

Disclaimer: This page provides a *rudimentary* overview of the history of the Hebrew script and is by no means intended to replace careful study of paleolinguists and other specialists in the field of ancient writing systems. For scholarly research, please see the Links page.

About the Name "Hebrew"

- Hebrew (*Ivrit*: עִבְרִית) is the name given to one of the world's oldest languages.
- The name derives from **Eber** ('ever: עֵבֶר), the son of Shem; 'ever means "region across or beyond" and derives from a root that means to pass over.
- **Shem** is called כָּל-בְּנֵי-עֵבֶר אָבִי, "the father of all of the sons of Eber" (Gen 10:21); and therefore Hebrew descendants are called Semites (שְׁמִיִּים).
- In the Scriptures, Hebrew is used as an adjective (עִבְרִי) to describe Jews who are "from the other side" (i.e., of the Euphrates River). Modern Hebrew is called *Ivrit*.
- In Genesis 31:47, Laban and Jacob refer to a heap of stones in their native speech. Laban uses the phrase "Yegar Sahaduta" which is Aramaic, but Jacob uses (גִּלְעָד) "gal'ed," which is Hebrew...

Primordial Origins (ראשונית עברית)

- The **Garden of Eden**, or *gan eden* (עֵדֶן גֶּן) is known as the first paradise, the location for the origin of man made *b'tzelem elohim*, in the image of God. This image included the ability to use a God-given language

(a theory that an original source language was given in Eden is called "Edenics"). Man was exiled from Eden, however, and began to be dispersed upon the face of the earth.

- The **Great Flood**, or *mabul* (מבול) effected judgment upon the antediluvian clans for their constant wickedness before the LORD. The only survivors were the direct descendants of the clan of Noah.
- The **Toldot b'nei Noach** (the generations of Noah, or Table of 70 Nations as listed in Genesis 10) indicate some of the earliest migration of clans. As mentioned above, Noah's son Shem is called קַלְבַּנִּי-עֶבֶר אָבִי, "the father of all of the sons of Eber" (Gen 10:21); his toldot is given in Genesis 11:10ff.
- The **Tower of Babel**, or *migdal bavel* (בבל מגדל) located in the "plains of Shinar" of ancient Mesopotamia (Gen 11:1-9) is historically identified as the original site of ancient Babylon. Perhaps the tower was a form of idolatrous ziggurat meant to unify the ancients.
- **Abraham**, a descendant of the clan of Eber, was called by God from Ur of the Chaldees (i.e., *kasdim*) c. 1800 BCE? to the land of Canaan. The language in Canaan at that time has been called "proto-Canaanite," the parent language of the dialects of Hittites, Amorites, Hivites, Jebusites, Perizites. In relation to the Hebrews, proto-Canaanite script may be called *ketav Ivri*.
- During the 400 years that Abraham's clan was in Egypt (Gen. 15:13), the Hebrews still spoke a **Canaanite variant** (e.g. Joseph's brothers in Egypt: see Gen. 42:23). An article of orthodox Jewish faith is that God originally revealed the Torah to Moses using *Ketav Ashuri* (אשורי כתב, from *ashrei*), not *ketav Ivri* (עברי כתב) since the earlier script was considered profane and riddled with paganism. After Moses broke the first set of tablets, however, God wrote the second set using the profane script.
- After the **Babylonian captivity** (לבבי שבוי) *ketav Ashuri* was fully restored to by Ezra the Scribe and came to be called *Lashon HaKodesh* (הקודש לשון, the holy language). This same script has been used until this day for the writing of Torah scrolls. Modern scribal arts (soferut: ספרות) include the Bet Yosef, Bet Ari, and Sephard styles of ketav Ashurit for Sifrei Torah (torah scrolls).

לשון הקדש

- A Midrash on the *Migdal Bavel* (Tower of Babel) teaches that at the end of time all people will once again speak one language, and that will be a purified form of the Hebrew tongue. There is also d'rash on the verse: "For then I will make the peoples pure of speech, so that they all invoke the LORD by name And serve Him with one accord" (Zeph 3:9) that indicates the same.

Proto-Canaanite Pictographs (כנעני-פרוטו כיתוב)

Like other ancient writing systems, the Hebrew alphabet originally was written using a pictographic or cuneiform-like script:



Note: For more information about pictographs and their meanings, [click here](#).

The Phoenecian Script (הפניקני התסריט)

The Phoenician alphabet developed from the proto-Canaanite alphabet, which was created sometime between the 18th and 17th centuries BC.

hēṭ ḥ	zayin z	wāw w	hē h	dālet d	gīmel g	bēt b	'ālef ,
sāmek s	nun n	mēm m	lāmed l	kaf k	yōd y	ṭēt ṭ	
tāw t	śin/šin š	rēš r	qōf q	šādē š	pē p	'ayin ,	

[Image courtesy of Omniglot](#)

The Proto-Hebrew Script (עברי-הפרוטו התסריט)

This is also called early Aramaic Script. The key extant example is the Moabite Stone. This was the Hebrew (*ketav Ivri*) used by the Jewish nation up to the Babylonian Exile (or, according to Orthodox Jews, until the Exodus from Egypt). At the end of the 6th century BC *ketav Ivri* was replaced by the Hebrew square script (*ketav meruba*).

										
kaf	yod	tet	het	zayin	waw	he	dalet	gimel	beyt	'alef
k	y	t	h	z	w	h	d	g	b	.
										
tav	sin	resh	qof	sadde	pe	'ayin	samek	nun	mem	lamed
t	s	r	q	s	p	.	s	n	m	l

[Image courtesy of Omniglot](#)

Note: Ketav Ivri was essentially the Phoenician alphabet that added semantic meaning through the novel use of dual-purpose "**vowel letters**" (i.e., Aleph, Hey, Vav). This script was used during in the First Temple period (though it was also used as a symbol of nationalistic revival in the Second Temple Period. A modified version of this script (Samaritan) is still extant today (see next).

The Samaritan Script (השומרני התסריט)

While the Jews adopted the Aramaic alphabet (under the leadership of Ezra the Scribe), the Samaritans held on to the original forms of earliest Hebrew script perhaps to show themselves the true heirs of Judaism. For this reason Ezra chose the Aramaic script or *ketav Ashuri*, also called *ketav meruba* (מרובע כתב) meaning "square writing."

										
kaf	yod	tet	chet	zayin	vav	he	dalet	gimel	bet	alef
k	y	t	h	z	w	h	d	g	b	.
										
tav	shin	resh	kof	tzadi	pe	ayin	samech	nun	mem	lamed
t	sh	r	k	tz	p	.	s	n	m	l

Classical Hebrew Script (אשורי כתב)

After the Babylonian captivity, *ketav Ashuri* (אשורי כתב) was adopted by the Jews (under the leadership of Ezra the Scribe) and called *Leshon HaKodesh* (the holy language). This was done probably to distance themselves from Samaritanism (השומרנים). The *Aramaic* square characters (i.e., *ketav meruba*: מרובע כתב) were chosen as the official script for the Torah scrolls in the 5th century BC (the Dead Sea Scrolls (DSS) were written during a transitional period where both the older *ketav Ivri* script is used with *ketav Ashurit*).

This classical Hebrew script was used for centuries before the time of Messiah, and has remained unchanged unto this day:

כ/ך	י	ט	ח	ז	ו	ה	ד	ג	ב	א
kaf	yod	tet	chet	zayin	vav	hey	dalet	gimmel	bet	'alef
ת	ש/שׁ	ר	ק	צ/ץ	פ/ף	ע	ס	נ/ן	מ/ם	ל
tav	shin	resh	qof	tsade	pey	'ayin	samech	nun	mem	lamed

Modern Hebrew Cursive (רהוט קתב)

The modern Hebrew script (used in Israel today) derives from Polish-German Jews.

כ	י	ט	ח	ז	ו	ה	ד	ג	ב	א
kaf	yod	tet	chet	zayin	vav	he	dalet	gimel	bet	alef
ת	שׁ/שׂ	ר	ק	צ	פ	ע	ס	נ	מ	ל
tav	shin/sin	resh	kof	tzadi(k)	pe	ayin	samech	nun	mem	lamed

Rashi-Style Hebrew (עברית י"רש)

The [Rashi style](#) is used mainly to write commentaries on texts. It is named in honor of Rabbi Shlomo Yitzchaki (1040-1105 AD) a.k.a. Rashi, one of the greatest medieval Jewish scholars and bible commentators:

כ	י	ט	ח	ז	ו	ה	ד	ג	ב	א
kaf	yod	tet	chet	zayin	vav	he	dalet	gimel	bet	alef
ת	שׁ/שׂ	ר	ק	צ	פ	ע	ס	נ	מ	ל
tav	shin/sin	resh	kof	tzadi(k)	pe	ayin	samech	nun	mem	lamed

Note: Ladino (Judeo-Spanish) and Yiddish (Judeo-German) both evolved during the middle ages and use the Hebrew characters for transliteration only. Ladino uses a Rashi-style script, whereas Yiddish uses the standard square script.

Evolution of Hebrew Script Styles...

ת	ש	ר	ק	צ	פ	ע	ס	נ	מ	ל	כ	י	ט	ח	ז	ו	ה	ד	ג	ב	א	
†	𐤀	𐤁	𐤂	𐤃	𐤄	𐤅	𐤆	𐤇	𐤈	𐤉	𐤊	𐤋	𐤌	𐤍	𐤎	𐤏	𐤐	𐤑	𐤒	𐤓	𐤔	Pale
𐤀	𐤁	𐤂	𐤃	𐤄	𐤅	𐤆	𐤇	𐤈	𐤉	𐤊	𐤋	𐤌	𐤍	𐤎	𐤏	𐤐	𐤑	𐤒	𐤓	𐤔	𐤕	Ivri
𐤀	𐤁	𐤂	𐤃	𐤄	𐤅	𐤆	𐤇	𐤈	𐤉	𐤊	𐤋	𐤌	𐤍	𐤎	𐤏	𐤐	𐤑	𐤒	𐤓	𐤔	𐤕	Tem
𐤀	𐤁	𐤂	𐤃	𐤄	𐤅	𐤆	𐤇	𐤈	𐤉	𐤊	𐤋	𐤌	𐤍	𐤎	𐤏	𐤐	𐤑	𐤒	𐤓	𐤔	𐤕	DSS
𐤀	𐤁	𐤂	𐤃	𐤄	𐤅	𐤆	𐤇	𐤈	𐤉	𐤊	𐤋	𐤌	𐤍	𐤎	𐤏	𐤐	𐤑	𐤒	𐤓	𐤔	𐤕	Rsh
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ת	ש	ר	ק	צ	פ	ע	ס	נ	מ	ל	כ	י	ט	ח	ז	ו	ה	ד	ג	ב	א	Yid

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Periods of Hebrew

Scholars often divide the Hebrew language into four basic periods:

1. **Early Hebrew** (מוקדמת עברית) - This includes speculation about proto-Hebrew Canaanite and the influence of the Phoenician script. Later this evolved into Middle Hebrew of the First Temple period.
2. **Biblical Hebrew** (מקראית עברית) - aka Classical Hebrew; by the time of Jesus, Aramaic was the common language, but Hebrew was used in synagogues and in Temple worship. Jesus knew and spoke Biblical Hebrew.
3. **Mishnaic Hebrew** (משנית עברית) - aka Rabbinic Hebrew; Talmud and Midrash; 2nd century AD. Note that the grammar and vocabulary of this Hebrew is very different than Biblical Hebrew.
4. **Medieval Hebrew** (הביניים מימי עברית) - Used to translate Arabic works into Hebrew, e.g., Maimonides and other medievalists.
5. **Modern Hebrew** (מודרנית עברית) - From the 19th century to present. Eliezer Ben Yehuda (1858-1922) led the rebirth of Hebrew as a spoken language. After immigrating to Israel in 1881, he began promoting the use of Hebrew at home and in the schools.

The Letters of Torah

What do we make of the pre-Babylonian Hebrew Script?



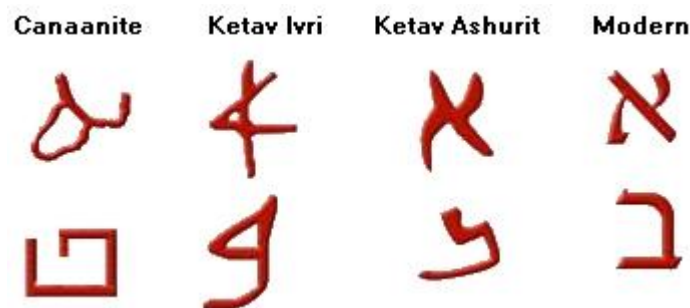
Bar Kokhba Coin
c. 132-35 AD

This coin uses Ketav Ivri, an older Hebrew script than that used in our Torah scrolls today...

Recently I read about how the largest-ever collection of coins from Bar-Kokhba revolt were recently found in the Judean hills. What is interesting about this -- from a Hebrew language perspective -- is that these coins are embossed with an earlier form of Hebrew script that *predates* the Second Temple period. This script, sometimes called *ketav Ivri* (or paleo-Hebrew), was used during the First Temple period, though it was later updated to the "square-style" Assyrian script (*ketav Ashurit*) by Ezra the Scribe in the 5th century BC (after the Babylonian Exile). It is nearly identical to the Phoenician script. Apparently Simon bar Kokhba emblematically used this older script on coins during the Jewish-Roman Wars of the 2nd century AD for jingoistic purposes. Interestingly enough, the older script can even be seen in modern Israel today. For example, the City of Nahariya (a coastal city in northern Israel) uses this script on its Coat of Arms emblem:



Scholars are uncertain how far back ketav Ivri goes in Jewish history, though it appears to date to at least the 10th century BC. The work of some paleolinguists suggests that an *even earlier* form of Canaanite cuneiform is actually the basis of ketav Ivri. These [Hebrew Word Pictures](#) are regarded as the most ancient form of Hebrew known. Here is a simplified illustration of the progression of the script forms (left-to-right, oldest to newest):



And here is how Genesis 1:1 looks in the three ancient Hebrew scripts:

Genesis 1:1

אֱלֹהִים	בְּרָא	אֶת	הַשָּׁמַיִם	וְהָאָרֶץ	וְהַיָּם	וְהָאֲרָצוֹת	Canaanite
אֱלֹהִים	בְּרָא	אֶת	הַשָּׁמַיִם	וְהָאָרֶץ	וְהַיָּם	וְהָאֲרָצוֹת	Ketav Ivri
אֱלֹהִים	בְּרָא	אֶת	הַשָּׁמַיִם	וְהָאָרֶץ	וְהַיָּם	וְהָאֲרָצוֹת	Ketav Ashurit

Do we have a letter-perfect Torah today?

All of this may make you feel somewhat uncertain about the integrity of Hebrew text found in our modern Hebrew Bibles, but there is no genuine reason for concern. In Judaism, two important halachic ("legal") concepts determine the transmission of the Hebrew text: 1) The "majority" of extant manuscripts available, and 2) the Masorah (מסורה), i.e., the long history of Jewish tradition and scribal arts relating to correct textual reading and preservation of the Hebrew Scriptures. (Note that the word "masorah" comes from the phrase *masoret ha-brit*, the "bond of the covenant" in [Ezek. 20:37](#).) We can rely on the preponderant reading of the ancient texts because they were accepted as authoritative in their time, just as we can rely on the notes of the Masoretic scribes because they were based on intensive study of even earlier manuscripts. Based on these two principles, we have confidence that we possess a near "letter-perfect" Torah, with less than 0.01% of letters being in doubt. Therefore we should have no qualm reciting the blessing, "This is the Torah that Moses placed before the Children of Israel, given by God, through Moses' hand..." said during the Torah reading ceremony at synagogue. According to the Talmud, Ketav Ashurit was a *transliteration of Hebrew* into a different script style, *not a translation into Aramaic*. In other words, Hebrew is Hebrew is Hebrew, despite the style of the script used to write it. After the Babylonian Exile, the sages retained the Hebrew Torah in Ktav Ashurit (i.e., the square script) even though the general public conducted their daily business using Aramaic. In addition, we also have the "masorah" and testimony of Yeshua the Messiah, who endorsed Ezra's transliteration of Hebrew down to the "jot and tittle" of the text of His day ([Matt. 5:18](#)).

Evolution of Hebrew Script Styles...

ת	ש	ר	ק	צ	פ	ע	ד	נ	מ	ל	כ	י	ט	ח	ז	ו	ה	ד	ג	ב	א	
†	𐤀	𐤁	𐤂	𐤃	𐤄	𐤅	𐤆	𐤇	𐤈	𐤉	𐤊	𐤋	𐤌	𐤍	𐤎	𐤏	𐤐	𐤑	𐤒	𐤓	𐤔	Pale
X	𐤀	𐤁	𐤂	𐤃	𐤄	𐤅	𐤆	𐤇	𐤈	𐤉	𐤊	𐤋	𐤌	𐤍	𐤎	𐤏	𐤐	𐤑	𐤒	𐤓	𐤔	Ivri
ח	ש	ר	ק	צ	פ	ע	ד	נ	מ	ל	כ	י	ט	ח	ז	ו	ה	ד	ג	ב	א	Tem
ת	ש	ר	ק	צ	פ	ע	ד	נ	מ	ל	כ	י	ט	ח	ז	ו	ה	ד	ג	ב	א	DSS
ת	ש	ר	ק	צ	פ	ע	ד	נ	מ	ל	כ	י	ט	ח	ז	ו	ה	ד	ג	ב	א	Rsh
ת	ש	ר	ק	צ	פ	ע	ד	נ	מ	ל	כ	י	ט	ח	ז	ו	ה	ד	ג	ב	א	STM
ת	ש	ר	ק	צ	פ	ע	ד	נ	מ	ל	כ	י	ט	ח	ז	ו	ה	ד	ג	ב	א	Mod
ת	ש	ר	ק	צ	פ	ע	ד	נ	מ	ל	כ	י	ט	ח	ז	ו	ה	ד	ג	ב	א	Yid

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Note: Because this subject seems to be a growing area of interest for people, I am considering adding Ketav Ivri script lessons to the online Hebrew Grammar pages ([Unit One](#)). Please let me know if you think this would be helpful to your studies, chaverim.